

in the dark room...

RACHEL HARRISON



Rachel Harrison titles her series of fifty-eight photographs after Charles Darwin's own journal, *Voyage of the Beagle* (1839). Yet, Harrison transforms her own discoveries into an amalgamation of contradicting, hybrid, disparate and juxtaposed identities that could not possibly follow the laws of evolutionary co- and inter-dependence. Conflating the normal and the paranormal, plastic mannequins and wig displays hang alongside a stuffed polar bear dressed in a bow tie, 5000-year old stone figures, and pop star Beyoncé Knowles, among other portraits, busts, and faces. Darwin sought to map the logical and empirical forces that govern life, but in the hands of an artist, this project becomes an exercise of a similar, if absurd, taxonomy of evolved species. And if Harrison's photographs confronts viewers with a long row of heads, her sculptures provide the missing bodies, as the three objects on view here are roughly the size of a headless human form. Each is coated with a signature pearlescent paint, turning anthropomorphism into abstraction once again.

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Harrison was born in 1966 in New York City, where she currently lives and works. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at Le Consortium, Dijon; Migros museum für gegenwartskunst, Zürich; Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Nürnberg; and Camden Arts Centre, London. Her work has been included in group shows at the 53rd *Venice Biennale*; Tate Britain, London; Baltimore Museum of Art; 2008 and 2002 *Whitney Biennials*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.; the 4th *Berlin Biennale*, KW Institute, Berlin; Carnegie International; and the 50th *Venice Biennale*. Recently, Harrison was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Center for Curatorial Studies and Hessel Museum of Art at Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; the show travels to the Whitechapel Gallery, London, in 2010.

Image:

Voyage of the Beagle, Two, 2008

Suite of 58 digital inkjet prints, 16 x 11 1/2 inches each

Courtesy of the artist and Greene Naftali Gallery, New York